

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAMA 01864 201053Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----062212 201414Z /50
R 200915Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6541

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 1864

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PPDC, TC, US
SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL LETTER TO BAHRAIN AMIR

REF: STATE 205970

1. DUE TO CONSTRAINTS ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS IMPOSED BY RAMADAN, I DELIVERED PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER TO AMIR ON LATE EVENING AUGUST 19. AMIR ASKED THAT I CONVEY HIS DEEP APPRECIATION FOR PRESIDENT'S "GRACIOUS" EFFORT TO KEEP AMIR IN PICTURE. HE AND OTHER ARABS RECOGNIZE COURAGEOUS NATURE OF PRESIDENT'S ACTION IN PUTTING HIS DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION ON LINE. (IN ASIDE AMIR SAID THAT HE RECOGNIZED MAJOR OBSTACLE IN PRESIDENT'S EFFORTS WAS NEGATIVE CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURES ON MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM.)

2. AOIR SAID THAT MOST HOPEFUL ASPECT OF PRESENT MOVEMENT WAS THAT SAUDI ARABIA HAD FINALLY EXPRESSED PUBLIC SUPPORT. THIS MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR SMALLER COUNTRIES LIKE BAHRAIN WHICH HAVE SUPPORTED PRESIDENTS CARTER AND SADAT'S ACTIVITIES ALL ALONG TO EXPRESS THIS SUPPORT PUBLICLY WHEN ASKED. THIS SAUDI SUPPORT CAME LATE AND WAS NEEDED ALL ALONG.

3. THE AMIR THEN SAID THAT IT WAS TIME FOR SOME COUNTRCES TO APPLY PRESSURE WHERE THEY COULD. EXPECTING THE USUAL ARAB LINE
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CONCERNING USG PRESSURE ON ISRAEL, I WAS SURPRISED WHEN HE SAID THAT AS SAUDI SUPPORTS SYRIA IN MANY WAYS SAUDI SHOULD BE ABLE TO BRING SYRIA ALONG IF ANY PROGRESS IS MADE AT CAMP DAVID. HE BELIEVED THAT SYRIAN SUPPORT WAS VITAL FOR EGYPT. HE SAID QAHDABI WAS CRAZY AND "WE ARABS" HOPE HE WILL BE GONE SOON BUT SYRIA WAS VERY DIFFERENT. SYRIA MUST BE BROUGHT INTO NEGOTIATIONS SOON FOR ANY REAL SETTLEMENT. HE ASSUMED THAT JORDAN

WOULD SOON BE A PART OF NEGOTIATIONS.

4. IN CLOSING REQUEST THAT I CONVEY HIS HIGHEST HOPES TO PRESIDENT CARTER THE AMIR MENTIONED POSSIBILITY OF FAILURE FOR THE FIRST TIME. HE SAID FAILURE AT CAMP DAVID WOULD BE VERY SERIOUS. EVERYONE MENTIONS WAR POTENTIAL SHOULD CAMP DAVID FAIL AND THIS IS TRUE CONCERN BUT "WE ARABS" CANNOT FIGHT A WAR NOW. SYRIA HAS NO MILITARY POWER BECAUSE OF LEBANON AND EGYPT HAS NOT RE-BUILT YET.

5. COMMENT: THE AMIR'S ATTITUDE THROUGHOUT WAS OPTIMISTIC. HE WAS LAUDATORY IN THE SAME TERMS TOWARD PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRESIDENT SADAT. HE NEVER MENTIONED PM BEGIN, ISRAEL, THE PALESTINIANS NOR USG PRESSURE ON ISRAEL. HIS MENTION OF POSSIBLE FAILURE CAME ALMOST AS AN AFTERTHOUGHT.
POWERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MANAMA01864
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780340-1147
Format: TEL
From: MANAMA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780844/aaaabkjo.tel
Line Count: 78
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: cae75160-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 STATE 205970
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1682788
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENTIAL LETTER TO BAHRAIN AMIR
TAGS: PPDC, PEPR, TC, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/cae75160-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014